ART BY ICHIHA AKIZUKI
WRITTEN BY MAI MOCHIZUKI
CHARACTER DESIGNS BY
SHIZU YAMAUCHI

CHAPTER 28:
THE SOUND OF THE BELL AT GION (PART 2)

それは
ムンクが見詰める先
乙女が抱きし
その刻に
小さな国の人々が
私はまわると囁きだす
あなたが探す
その鍵は旅立つこともなく
そこであなたを
待っているでしょう

Behold the subject of Munch's gaze.
In the time the maiden holds in her arms,
The people of the tiny country whisper, "I turn."
The key that you seek is not on a journey.
It is waiting for you there.

I'M HERE TO ENJOY THE NEW YEAR'S PARTY.

WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' HERE?

AIN'T THAT RIGHT, YAGASHIRA-SENSEI?

ASKED YAGASHIRA-SENEI HIMSELF AND EVERYTHIN'.

AND I WENT ABOUT IT ALL NICE AND PROPER LIKE A REAL GENT.

DO THOSE TWO HAVE A BAD HISTORY?

THERE'S A DEFINITE TENSION IN THE AIR...

MURMUR

MURMUR

MURMUR

I DON'T KNOW...

WHO'S THAT?

Holmes-san exposed his forgeries,

and he's seen Holmes-san as a rival ever since.

He's a genius counter-feiter.

WORSE THAN BAD, I'D SAY.

ENSHO...

DON'T GO LOOKIN' AT ME THAT WAY.

LET'S GET ON WITH THE TREASURE HUNT.

"BEHOLD THE SUBJECT OF MUNCH'S GAZE."

"IN THE TIME THE MAIDEN HOLDS IN HER ARMS..."

DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHERE THE KEY IS?

"THE KEY THAT YOU SEEK IS NOT ON A JOURNEY."

"THE PEOPLE OF THE TINY COUNTRY WHISPER, 'I TURN.'"

"IT IS WAITING FOR YOU THERE."

HOW DID YOU KNOW IT WAS THERE?

WOW!

"THE PEOPLE OF THE TINY COUNTRY ..."

THE "TINY COUNTRY" HERE'S VATICAN CITY.

THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE VATICAN IS LATIN.

AND IN LATIN, "I TURN" IS "VOLVO."

JUST LIKE THE CAR-MAKER.

SO WHEN YOU CONVERT THE FOUR MINUTES OF "RÊVERIE" INTO SECONDS...

おお— WOW...

M UT 653

AH!

THE VOLVO 240!

VOLVO 240

AND THE KEY BEING INSIDE A CAR...

"THE KEY THAT YOU SEEK IS NOT ON A JOURNEY. IT IS WAITING FOR YOU THERE."

...EXPLAINS THOSE LINES.

I SEE...

SO THE MINIATURE CARS BEING THE ONLY EXHIBIT WITH TAGS WAS A HINT.

HAD I KNOWN YOU WERE COMING, I WOULD HAVE WRITTEN IT ESPECIALLY FOR YOU.

KNOWIN' YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WROTE THE RIDDLE, I HAD HIGH HOPES...

BUT IT WAS SO SIMPLE, I'M DISAP-POINTED.

BUT ARRIVING LATE TO A PARTY AND STEALING THE SPOT-LIGHT... IT'S ALMOST CHARMINGLY CHILDISH, I MUST SAY.

THIS IS HONESTLY GETTING A LITTLE SCARY...

WELL, I CAN'T DENY I WAS LATE.

AH!

SO I'LL LET THE GIRL HAVE THE KEY.

A NEW YEAR'S PARTY'S SUPPOSED TO BE FUN, AIN'T IT?

COME NOW, DON'T MAKE SUCH A TERRIFYIN' FACE.

"GAME"?

SPEAKIN' OF...

I PREPARED A LITTLE GAME OF MY OWN FOR YA.

IT'S AN APPRAISIN' GAME.

SEE IF YOU CAN TELL WHAT'S REAL AND WHAT WAS MADE BY YOURS TRULY.

WHAT IS THIS?

YOU'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR THIS TOO, I BET.

AGAIN? THIS SEEMS IN POOR TASTE.

VERY WELL.

WELL, I WOULDN'T PUT IT PAST YA.

NOT FOR DRIVING INTO YOUR HEAD, I SUPPOSE?

WHAT ARE THE HAMMER AND KNIFE FOR?

MY, I QUITE LIKE THIS.

GETTING TO DESTROY COUNTERFEITS IMMEDIATELY WILL ALLEVIATE SOME STRESS.

I FIGURED.

BUT NO.

IF YOU THINK AN ITEM'S FAKE, THEN USE THOSE TO DESTROY IT.

NOW, LET'S BEGIN...

...WITH THESE.

RAKU TEA BOWLS?

THOSE ARE... RAKU TEA BOWLS.

HOLMES-SAN TAUGHT ME ABOUT THEM.

YEAH, I THINK SO.

A REAL ONE WOULD BE PRETTY EXPENSIVE, I BET.

SO THEY'RE KNOWN FOR THEIR THICKNESS AND SLIGHT IMPERFECTIONS THAT EMPHASIZE THEIR HAND-CRAFTED NATURE.

THEY ALSO REFLECT THE TASTES OF SEN NO RIKYU AND HIS CONTEMPO-RARIES.

RAKU TEA BOWLS WERE INVENTED IN THE *MOMOYAMA* PERIOD BY THE FOUNDER OF THE HOUSE OF RAKU, CHOJIRO.

THEY'RE DERIVED FROM THE SANCAI OF CHINA.

THEY BOTH LOOK THE SAME TO ME, THOUGH...

ME TOO...

CRACK!

SO THAT WAS THE FAKE ONE...

ABUZZ

ドッ

THOUGH THEY WERE MADE IN THE STYLE OF KEINYU, ELEVENTH HEAD OF THE HOUSE OF RAKU,

THE SKILL AND TASTE LEVEL HARDLY COMPARED TO THE ORIGINALS.

THEY WERE BOTH FAKES.

AW, AND HERE I THOUGHT THAT MAKIN' TWO OF 'EM WOULD THROW YA OFF.

KNOWING IT WAS YOU WHO MADE THESE FORGERIES, I HAD HIGH HOPES...

BUT THEY WERE SO SIMPLE, I'M DISAP-POINTED.

NOW, WHAT ABOUT THIS?

YOU'RE AS IMPLACABLE AS EVER.

A YAMAOKA TESSHU SCROLL?

YOU WROTE IT RATHER WELL,

BUT THIS TOO...

RIP

...IS A FORGERY.

WHAT, SO THEY'RE ALL FAKES?

YOU CUT THROUGH THAT ONE AWFUL QUICK.

SORRY.

THIS'LL BE THE FINALE.

BUT...

I WAS SAVIN' THE BEST FOR LAST.

東洲齋寫樂

A SHARAKU PAINTING.

A SHARAKU PAINTING ?!

SHARAKU?

THAT MYSTERIOUS UKIYO-E ARTIST, RIGHT?

YES.

SO THIS...

...MAY BE RATHER DIFFICULT.

MANAGER?

SHARAKU WAS ONLY ACTIVE FOR TEN MONTHS, THEN DISAPPEARED COMPLETELY.

EVEN TODAY, NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT HIS CAREER OR WHERE HE CAME FROM.

HE LOVES HIS UKIYO-E.

UEDA KNOWS MORE ABOUT THIS THAN I DO.

BECAUSE IT'S A SHARAKU?

IT'S LESS ABOUT SHARAKU ...

...AND MORE ABOUT UKIYO-E ITSELF.

I GET WHAT YOU'RE SAYIN'.

WELL, YEAH...

FIRST, A LITTLE ABOUT UKIYO-E.

MOST OF WHAT WE THINK OF AS UKIYO-E IS THE WOODBLOCK KIND.

"NIKUHITSU UKIYO-E" WHICH ARE HAND-PAINTED; AND "UKIYO-E HANGA" WHICH ARE WOODBLOCK PRINTS.

THERE'RE TWO TYPES OF UKIYO-E ART OUT THERE:

COMPARATIVELY, NIKUHITSU PAINTINGS ARE UNIQUE, WHICH MAKES 'EM FAR MORE VALUABLE.

THE VALUE OF SUCH PRINTS VARIES WIDELY BY PERIOD OF PRODUCTION AND CURRENT CONDITION.

IT'S A KIND OF MASS PRODUCTION, IN A WAY.

THEN A CARVER AND A PRINTER CREATE THE FINAL WORK BASED ON THAT.

FOR THOSE, THE ARTIST DRAWS THE DESIGN.

WHAT ?!

HOKUSAI, FOR INSTANCE, WAS KNOWN FOR CHANGIN' HIS PEN NAME AND LETTIN' HIS STUDENTS USE HIS OLD ONES.

A PAINTER'S STUDENTS START BY COPYIN' THEIR MASTER, SO THEIR STYLES CAN BE SIMILAR.

BUT WHILE YOU APPRAISE A NIKUHITSU BASED ON SIGNATURE, HISTORY, AND PAINTING STYLE,

THAT'S WHAT MAKES UKIYO-E SO DIFFICULT TO APPRAISE.

THEN WHAT ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO LOOK FOR IN AN APPRAISAL?

IN 1934,

THE NEWS REPORTED THAT A COLLECTION OF NIKUHITSU PAINTINGS BY SHARAKU AND HOKUSAI...

...HAD BEEN DISCOVERED IN THE POSSESSION OF A MEMBER OF AN INFLUENTIAL DAIMYO FAMILY NAMED SHUNPOAN.

THERE WAS A FAMOUS CASE INVOLVING NIKUHITSUS CALLED THE SHUNPOAN AFFAIR.

THE WHAT?

A FAMOUS APPRAISER NAMED SASAKAWA RINPU EVEN DECLARED THAT THEY WERE GENUINE.

SO THIS WAS AN INCREDIBLE FIND.

NOW, IT WAS BELIEVED THAT ALL OF SHARAKU'S NIKUHITSUS HAD BEEN DESTROYED IN THE GREAT KANTO EARTHQUAKE.

IF THEY HAD BEEN REAL, THAT IS.

YES

THEY WOULD'VE BEEN WORTH HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS TODAY.

YES

WHAT A SCORE!

THE AFFAIR RESULTED IN SASAKAWA'S FALL FROM GRACE.

THEY WERE FAKE?!

IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, THE PIECES IN QUESTION WERE DETERMINED TO BE COUNTERFEITS FROM A GROUP OF SCAM ARTISTS.

THAT'S JUST HOW TRICKY APPRAISING UKIYO-E CAN BE.

BUT THE STORY STILL MAKES THE BLOOD OF APPRAISERS EVERYWHERE RUN COLD.

WE KNOW IT COULD'VE HAPPENED TO ANY OF US.

THE WORLD AT THE TIME BLAMED SASAKAWA AND HIS LACK OF SKILL...

SO IF ALL OF SHARAKU'S NIKUHITSUS WERE LOST,

ISN'T THIS A FAKE TOO?

CAN'T SAY FOR SURE.

RECENTLY, A GENUINE SHARAKU NIKUHITSU WAS FOUND IN GREECE.

ALBANIA

GREECE

TURKEY

IN GREECE ?!

THERE WAS A GREEK AMBASSADOR WHO COLLECTED ASIAN FINE ART.

HIS COLLECTION WAS A CENTURY OLD,

BUT IT INCLUDED A GENUINE SHARAKU NIKUHITSU.

HOLMES-SAN...

YEAH, THERE'S A POSSIBILITY THIS MIGHT BE REAL.

THEN THERE'S A POSSIBILI-TY...

NNGH...

WHAT'S GOING THROUGH HOLMES-SAN'S MIND RIGHT NOW...

HE'S APPRAISING MORE THAN JUST A POSSIBILITY.

BUT...

HE'S EVALUATING THE PAINTING...

JUDGING ITS QUALITIES.

AND...

THERE'S JUST SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PAINTING...

...THAT GRIPS HIM.

HE'S UNSURE.

HI

CLENCH

SO THAT'S YOUR ANSWER, EH?

HATE TO BREAK IT TO YA...

BUT THAT SHARAKU WAS REAL!

CHAPTER 28
END